



Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs

For Immediate Release
November 3, 2008

Lisa Aug (502) 564-9203
Lisa.Aug@ky.gov
veterans.ky.gov

Kentucky Memorial's 20th Anniversary on Veterans Day

*All Veterans to be Honored in Ceremony
at Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Frankfort*

(FRANKFORT, KY Sept. 8, 2008) Please join the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs (KDVA) and the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs (KDMA) in a special tribute to Kentucky veterans on the 20th anniversary of the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Frankfort November 11.

The ceremony will begin at 11 a.m. at the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial on Coffee Tree Lane in Frankfort, in front of the Kentucky Library and Archives.

The ceremony also recognizes the 10th Anniversary of the creation of the Kentucky Department of Veterans Affairs.

Speakers will include Brigadier General Leslie E. Beavers, US Army retired,, KDVA Commissioner, and Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial (KVVM) Fund Board of Directors Chair J. McFerran Barr II. KVVM Fund Executive Director James Halvatgis will serve as Master of Ceremonies, and Major General Edward Tonini, Adjutant General of Kentucky, will give the keynote speech.

Veterans organizations will place wreaths at the monument, and the 138th Fires Brigade of the Kentucky Army National Guard (KYARNG) will provide an artillery salute. The 63rd Theater

Aviation Brigade of the KYARNG will perform a “Missing Man” flyover and, and the 202nd Army Band, KYARNG will play “Taps” and “Reveille.”

There will be a display of items that have been placed at the memorial over the years. After the ceremony, American Legion Post 7 on Versailles Road in Frankfort will provide chili and finger food free of charge.

The Kentucky Vietnam Veterans memorial overlooks the state Capitol and honors the 125,000 Kentuckians who served this nation so courageously and unselfishly during the Vietnam era (1962-1975.)

More than 58,000 Americans gave their lives during the conflict. Among that number, 1103 were Kentuckians. Thousands of those who served were wounded in action and hundreds are still listed as missing in action .

The veterans whose names are listed on this Memorial fought and died for the same values that inspired their ancestors since the Revolutionary War – life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

The blue-gray granite of the memorial contains the names of Kentucky’s 1,103 citizens who died. Each name is precisely located so the shadow of the sundial pointer, or gnomon, touches each veteran’s name on the anniversary of his death. Thus, each individual is honored with a personal tribute. Accordingly, every day is memorial day for a Kentucky Vietnam veteran.

The Memorial’s unique design was created by Helm Roberts, a Lexington, Kentucky, architect and veteran. The groundbreaking ceremony was held November 7, 1987 and constructed was completed in late summer 1988. The Memorial was opened on November 11, 1988 and officially dedicated on November 12, 1988.

The Memorial is one of the largest granite memorials in the nation and contains 327 cut stone panels weighing more than 215 tons. The stone came from the Pyramid Blue quarry in Elberton, GA.

The lettering of the names and dates is the same style used for official government grave markers throughout the nation, including Arlington national Cemetery.

Verses from Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 are inscribed around the base of the gnomon.

*For everything there is a season, and
A time for every matter under the heaven:
A time to be born, and a time to die;
A time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and a time to build up;
A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;*

*A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.
A time to get, and a time to lose;
A time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew;
A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time for war, and a time for peace.*

The Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial was built entirely through private donations and the dedication and leadership of many Vietnam Veterans at a time when many people were deaf to the need for such a tribute. The Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund is a non-profit 501 (C)(3) corporation that maintains the Memorial and grounds.

The Memorial is open to visitors every day of the year at no charge. Since its dedication in 1988, it has become one of the most visited landmarks in the Commonwealth.